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Identical letters dated 14 January 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that the Turkish armed forces have embarked on a new series of wide-ranging military operations against Iraqi territory, as follows:

1. On 21 and 22 December 2001, a Turkish military force of some 400 troops with 50 military vehicles and 30 tanks loaded on transporters entered northern Iraq in the Zakho area by way of the Ibrahim al-Khalil gate.

2. On 28 December 2001, 10 civilian buses and 12 military vehicles carrying some 800 Turkish special forces troops entered by way of the same gate. Part of the force, which had come from its headquarters base in Turkey's Kayseri province, took up positions in the Baykufah sector and the remainder in the Diyana area.

This new Turkish incursion into Iraq's northern territories is part of a series of hostile operations and of the flagrant violations being committed by Turkish armed forces against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq. These actions confirm the duplicitous policy being pursued by Turkey with regard to the anomalous situation in northern Iraq that it helped to create and perpetuate in an act of blatant interference in the internal affairs of Iraq. Turkey's claim that it is in pursuit of elements that pose a threat to its national security cannot legitimize its assaults on Iraq's sovereignty, and the correct way to safeguard the security of Turkey's southern borders is for it to respect Iraq's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity and to desist from facilitating foreign interference in Iraq's internal affairs and encroachments on its sovereignty and territory.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq condemns and deplores in the strongest terms the constant violation of Iraq's territory and airspace in the north by Turkish armed forces in breach of the principles of good-neighbourliness and the norms embodied in international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

We call upon Turkey to desist forthwith from these hostile practices and to withdraw its invading forces from Iraqi territory. We affirm that the Government of Iraq reserves in full its legitimate right to defend itself, and we consider that Turkey bears full responsibility under international law for the consequences of its ongoing

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aggression, its violations of Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity and airspace and its exposure of Iraq's security and safety to grave risks.

We hope that the United Nations will fulfil its responsibilities and that it will urge the Turkish Government to comply with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law by ceasing forthwith its military aggression and its blatant interference in Iraq's internal affairs and by immediately withdrawing its armed forces from Iraq's territory.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdul Munim **Al-Kadhe**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.